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The Higher Criticism in its Theological Bearings.*—The higher criticism is modern in its origin. While scholars of former days concerned themselves with the text of Scripture, questions are now being discussed as to the composition, the credibility, the integrity and literary form of the biblical writings. The issue of these modern investigations has left the New Testament practically whole and unharmed. But the case is different with the Old Testament and especially with the Pentateuch. The critical scholars of the Old Testament to-day are practically unanimous in maintaining the composite character of the Pentateuch. It is probably a compilation of at least four separate documents all subsequent to the time of Moses. This theory being accepted, what are the results to theology? Are they inconsistent with the Christian faith? While some conceptions of the Old Testament will be altered or destroyed, its essential character as a book of infallible moral and religious teaching will remain. In support of this it is to be noted (1) that though not written by Moses, it is no forgery unworthy of credit, for the book as a whole does not claim to have been written by Moses. Nor, indeed, was there in those days any notion of literary ownership, and it was not regarded as dishonorable to put one's own words into the mouth of another. It was never done in order to deceive. (2) This theory does not impeach the veracity of Christ, for He did not claim to be omniscient, and in many things he was willing to work in harmony with the views of his age. His authority does not decide the question; for it in this case becomes simply the authority of that generation of the Jews that crucified Him. (3) This theory leaves the history just as credible as does the traditional view; for both must allow the use of earlier documents by the author or authors. The Pentateuch, though written late in the life of the nation, is in entire harmony with the earlier historical books, and indeed, on this hypothesis, is more fully brought into accord with them. Tradition among ancient peoples was a valuable method of transmitting the knowledge of events. Among the Hebrews, especially, it was largely free from myth and legend. (4) But this theory does alter the traditional conception of the course of religious life and thought in Israel. They did not receive their entire law, theology and ritual at the beginning. Not a gloriously complete divine revelation followed by a thousand years of apostasy, but a growing apprehension and appropriation of the Jehovah who dwelt among them, is the view which this theory constrains us to adopt. It was this profound consciousness of the divine presence with them that distinguished Israel as a people. God was in the life of Israel in a higher and more intensive form than in other nations. (5) The law then does not point directly to Christ, but only as first it sprang out of the soil of national life. Yet all this national life was Messianic. The entire history of Israel is typical of Christ and therefore all parts of its literature and life find their fullness in Him. Thus the new view is not found necessarily fatal to the Christian faith. It is a theory about the Bible. Christianity neither stands nor falls with any theory of the Bible.

The article will generally be regarded as taking ground which the evangelical rank and file are not ready to accept. It is a phase of the question worthy of careful consideration. The tone and spirit are very liberal, yet entirely constructive.

The Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry.†—(1) Hebrew poetry has the qualities of all true poetry,—noble thought, expressed rhythmically, impressively, imagina-

* By Rev. Wm. Rupp, D. D., *Reformed Quarterly Review*. July, 1888. Pp. 344-377.

† By John H. Thomas in *The Presbyterian Quarterly*, July, 1888. Pp. 261-274.

tively. The poetic nature was characteristic of the Hebrew people throughout their history. (2) That so much of the divine revelation is written in poetry is explained by the fact that the human heart is most easily and deeply stirred by great thoughts rhythmically expressed.

The characteristics of Hebrew poetry are (1) chiefly and universally, its religious purpose; (2) the absence of any consciousness of art; (3) unity; (4) the total absence of any use of, or approach toward, fiction; (5) directness, simplicity and sincerity; (6) the use of the bolder figures of speech; (7) joyousness; (8) the employment of imagery drawn from the natural scenery of Palestine, from domestic life, from Hebrew history; (9) artistic form; (10) sublimity.

A presentation, in some respects hardly up to the times; but comprehensive and helpful.

The Unchangeable Word.*—Progress in knowledge involving the passing away of much that seemed to be established, is the characteristic of the present age. But the truths that were originally written in the Word of God are unalterably the same. The Bible when it came from the hand of God was perfect. This is argued (1) from the fact that the same God inspired the whole of it. It is as complete and perfect as its divine author. It is substantiated (2) by the attributes of God. He is unchangeable and perfect, and the revelation he has given cannot be less than complete and established forever. This is proved also (3) by the great object for which the Scriptures were written—to proclaim to all ages the one everlasting gospel. This gospel based on universal human needs is unalterable and cannot be amended or improved. Practical inferences follow:—(1) All the great doctrines of the Bible are fixed, whether or not man comprehends them. (2) The moral law as laid down in the Bible is forever the same and is forever binding on men.

A staunch and hearty upholding of the most conservative views relating to the Bible. It is reassuring, in these days of so many interrogations, to read such an article.

A Revised Text of the Hebrew Bible.†—The Revised Version of the English Bible is very unsatisfactory because it adheres to the massoretic text and fails to give any adequate recognition of the critical scholarship of the last two hundred years. This massoretic text has no real claim to be considered an accurate transcript of the original manuscripts. Critical scholars for three centuries and more have been comparing and emending this imperfect text on the established principles of textual criticism. Examples of these changes are found in Gen. 1:1, where for *shamaim* (heavens) is to be read *maim* (waters); also in Judges 3:8, where for *aram* the correct reading is *edom*; in Deut. 33:2, where the translation of the corrected text is “and came from Meribah-Kadesh.” Other changes desirable are to remove passages which are out of place, to their rightful positions, to restore the ancient order of the O. T. Books, to give the prophetic writings their proper chronological order and assign them to their right authors, and to perform a similar service for the Psalms. A text thus amended and altered, the result of twenty-five years of close critical study, has been prepared by Prof. Graetz of Breslau, and now awaits publication. The cost of publishing such a work will be great, and it is hoped that American men of wealth and scholarship will feel it an honor to aid in this enterprise.

* By T. W. Hooper D. D. in *The Presbyterian Quarterly*, July, 1888. Pp. 208-216.

† By A. W. Thayer in *Unitarian Review*, July 1888. Pp. 58-69.